



Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18PR1043

Site Name: Bladensburg Library

Prehistoric ☒

Other name(s)

Historic ☒

Unknown ☐

Brief Description:

Late Archaic/Transitional short-term camp; Early 19th to Early 20th century schoolhouse

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.9419 Longitude -76.9468

Elevation m Site slope

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 11

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Anacostia River

Saltwater

Ocean ☐

Estuary/tidal river ☐

Tidewater/marsh ☐

Minimum distance to water is 275 m

Freshwater

Stream/river ☒

Swamp ☐

Lake or pond ☐

Spring ☐

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site ☐

Woodland site ☐

Archaic site ☐

MD Adena ☐

Early archaic ☐

Early woodland ☐

Middle archaic ☐

Mid. woodland ☐

Late archaic ☒

Late woodland ☐

Unknown prehistoric context ☐

Contact period site ☐

ca. 1820 - 1860 ☒

ca. 1630 - 1675 ☐

ca. 1860 - 1900 ☒

ca. 1675 - 1720 ☐

ca. 1900 - 1930 ☒

ca. 1720 - 1780 ☐

Post 1930 ☒

ca. 1780 - 1820 ☒

Unknown historic context ☐

Unknown context ☐

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American ☐

Asian American ☐

African American ☒

Unknown ☐

Anglo-American ☒

Other ☐

Hispanic ☐

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component ☐

Misc. ceremonial ☐

Village ☐

Rock art ☐

Hamlet ☐

Shell midden ☐

Base camp ☐

STU/lithic scatter ☒

Rockshelter/cave ☐

Quarry/extraction ☐

Earthen mound ☐

Fish weir ☐

Cairn ☐

Production area ☐

Burial area ☐

Unknown ☐

Other context ☐

Historic

Urban/Rural? Urban ☒

Domestic

Homestead ☐

Farmstead ☐

Mansion ☐

Plantation ☐

Row/townhome ☐

Cellar ☐

Privy ☐

Industrial

Mining-related ☐

Quarry-related ☐

Mill ☐

Black/metalsmith ☐

Furnace/forge ☐

Other ☐

Transportation

Canal-related ☐

Road/railroad ☐

Wharf/landing ☐

Maritime-related ☐

Bridge ☐

Ford ☐

Educational

Commercial ☒

Trading post ☐

Store ☐

Tavern/inn ☐

Military

Battlefield ☐

Fortification ☐

Encampment ☐

Townsite

Religious ☐

Church/mtg house ☐

Ch support bldg ☐

Burial area

Cemetery ☐

Sepulchre ☐

Isolated burial ☐

Bldg or foundation ☒

Possible Structure ☐

Post-in-ground ☐

Frame-built ☒

Masonry ☒

Other structure ☐

Slave related

Non-domestic agri ☐

Recreational ☐

Midden/dump ☐

Artifact scatter ☐

Spring or well ☐

Unknown ☐

Other context ☒

schoolhouse

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types	
Clovis	<input type="text"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="text"/>
Palmer	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="text"/>
Le Croy	<input type="text"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="text"/>
Guilford	<input type="text"/>
Brewerton	<input type="text"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="text"/>
Koens-Crispin	<input type="text"/>
Perkiomen	<input type="text"/>
Susquehanna	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Vernon	<input type="text"/>
Piscataway	<input type="text"/>
Calvert	<input type="text"/>
Selby Bay	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="text"/>
Madison/Potomac	<input type="text"/>
Levanna	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="text"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="text"/>	Shepard	<input type="text"/>	Keyser	<input type="text"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="text"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="text"/>	Townsend	<input type="text"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="text"/>
Selden Island	<input type="text"/>	Watson	<input type="text"/>	Minguanan	<input type="text"/>	Monongahela	<input type="text"/>
Accokeek	<input type="text"/>	Mockley	<input type="text"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="text"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="text"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="text"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="text"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="text"/>		
Vinette	<input type="text"/>	Page	<input type="text"/>	Moyaone	<input type="text"/>		
				Potomac Cr	<input type="text"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone	<input type="text"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="text"/>	Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="text"/>	Jackfield	<input type="text"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="text" value="2"/>	English Brown	<input type="text"/>
Borderware	<input type="text"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="text"/>	Whiteware	<input type="text" value="80"/>	Eng Dry-bodie	<input type="text"/>
Buckley	<input type="text"/>	North Devon	<input type="text"/>	Porcelain	<input type="text" value="14"/>	Nottingham	<input type="text"/>
Creamware	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Pearlware	<input type="text" value="27"/>			Rhenish	<input type="text"/>
						Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="text"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts	
Flaked stone	<input type="text" value="1110"/>
Ground stone	<input type="text"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="text"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="text" value="32"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="text"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="text"/>
Other fired clay	<input type="text"/>
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Modified faunal	<input type="text"/>
Unmod faunal	<input type="text"/>
Oyster shell	<input type="text"/>
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Uncommon Obj.	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="text"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="text"/>
Midden	<input type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Shell midden	<input type="text"/>	Ossuary	<input type="text"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="text"/>		

Lithic Material

Jasper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	orthoquartzite,	<input type="text"/>

☐ Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts	
Pottery (all)	<input type="text" value="141"/>
Glass (all)	<input type="text" value="1347"/>
Architectural	<input type="text" value="1139"/>
Furniture	<input type="text"/>
Arms	<input type="text" value="4"/>
Clothing	<input type="text" value="12"/>
Personal items	<input type="text" value="6"/>
Tobacco related	<input type="text" value="4"/>
Activity item(s)	<input type="text" value="115"/>
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Faunal material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Misc. kitchen	<input type="text" value="278"/>
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Misc.	<input type="text" value="155"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Historic Features

Const feature	<input type="text"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="text"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
Foundation	<input type="text"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="text"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="text"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="plow scar, shrub removed"/>	
Hearth/chimney	<input type="text"/>	Sheet midden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="text"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="text"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="text"/>		
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="text"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="text"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="text"/>		

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 2:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 3:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 4:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 5:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 6:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 7:	<input type="text"/> 0 +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 8:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 9:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability

☐ Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Bladensburg Library Site (18PR1043) is a multicomponent archeological site in Bladensburg, Prince George's County. The earliest occupation at the site is a Late Archaic/Transitional short-term camp. Later deposits include evidence of mid to late 18th century informal use of the area, and deposits from the early 19th-early 20th century use of the site as a schoolhouse. The site is situated on the fourth terrace of the Anacostia River, at the interface between the terrace and the base of the uplands, which rise to the east. The 1.32 acre parcel on which the site sits, contains a public library building, a large parking area to the north and west of the library, a brick wall running along the southern edge of the property, and a large section of manicured lawn on the periphery of the library and parking lot. The surrounding landscape is heavy developed: a typical urban landscape for Prince George's County. Soils at the site are Russet loams, Christiana silt loams, and frequently-flooded Zekiah soils.

The library is a two-storey brick building with a front-gabled roof, and a full basement that serves as the first floor of the library. The southeast corner stone has a date of 1925 on its southern face. The building was built in 1925 as a public school, replacing an earlier school that had burned down.

In 1742, plans for the newly established town of Bladensburg were laid out on 60 acres of land along the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River (Anacostia River) on a portion of a larger tract of land owned by Elizabeth Calvert. The 60 acres allotted for the town were to be divided "as near as may be into sixty equal lots, allowing sufficient space for streets, land, etc., and the lots to be numbered from 1 to 60". Site 18PR1043 is situated on what was originally Lots 47 and 48 of the original town plat.

Lot 48 was purchased on March 15h, 1742 for 10 shillings by a Kennedy Farrell. He, however, forfeited his ownership of the lot by failing to comply with the MD General Assembly's provision that all new owners build a house on the property within 18 months. On March 14th, 1747, Lot 47 was purchased for the first time by a William Brown, while Lot 48 was purchased by George Gordon. Although county record books do not make mention of either lot for another 24 years, it can be assumed that no significant buildings were constructed on either lot as both are still described as "unimproved" in 1771 when they were both sold to Daniel Stephenson along with Lot 59 for 25 shillings. The properties changed hands once more in 1779 when they were sold, this time without Lot 59, to Richard Ponsonby.

The lots finally met the General Assembly's qualifications for improvement under the ownership of Ponsonby. In 1787 both are listed as recently improved under his ownership, however the nature of the improvements is unknown. The 1798 Federal Direct Tax schedule shows Ponsonby owned at least four lots in the town, including Lots 47 and 48, as well as Lot 41, which was adjacent to Lot 47. The schedule lists only two structures between those three lots consisting of a two-storey granary and a stable (the General Assembly had amended their building requirements in 1744 to qualify lots with warehouses and other non-residential structures as "improved"). Ponsonby likely lived on Lot 36, where a dwelling house and several other structures are listed.

While Ponsonby is listed as the owner of both Lots 47 and 48 in the 1798 tax schedule, a deed from 1783 gives details of the sale of Lots 47 and 48, along with several other properties owned by Ponsonby, to John Steinmetz and William Bell of Philadelphia. Presumably, the properties were sold by Ponsonby in an attempt to satisfy a large debt. No other information can be found for the ownership of the lots by Steinmetz and Bell, however, an 1803 indenture reinforces the financial difficulties of Ponsonby. The indenture calls for the deed of all of Ponsonby's property, "excepting the necessary wearing apparel of himself" to Overton Carr in trust for his creditors, but makes no mention of specific properties.

No deeds for the lots could be found for the first half of the 19th century. However, several maps from the mid to late 19th century indicate the existence of a school building on Lot 48. The school shown on the maps is most likely the Bladensburg Academy. An act to incorporate the trustees of Bladensburg Academy was first passed in January of 1816. It is unlikely, however, that the school was constructed at that time. In 1833, the General Assembly passed a supplemental act to revive the act to incorporate the trustees of the school and to provide a new plan to draw a lottery to fund the construction of the school.

Five years later, an advertisement announcing the opening of the private school was placed in the National Intelligencer, suggesting the school was constructed sometime between 1833 and 1838. The advertisement describes the school as an "infant institution" with "the location of the academic buildings very agreeable, (and) with spacious areas for exercise". The advertisement implies the school property contained multiple buildings at the time. Bladensburg Academy was originally created as a small private school for boys. The 1838 advertisement boasts that "Greek, Latin, and French languages will be thoroughly taught, with the Mathematics, Geography, and the elementary branches of a sound English education". The advertisement also places emphasis on the development of strong morals and character development of its students.

A historic photograph taken sometime between 1885 and 1905 depicts the "Old Bladensburg Academy" schoolhouse in the foreground with the Episcopal Church (built ca. 1844) in the background. The schoolhouse is a two-storey, brick, side gabled building with a large cupola extending from the center of the roof and a chimney at each end. The building has a one storey gable-front entry. The overall character of the building is reminiscent of federal-style architecture although alterations including the cupola and enclosed front entry were likely added later and not part of the original design. Based on the visible construction materials and building style, this is likely the 1830s schoolhouse.

In 1843, the trustees of the Bladensburg Academy petitioned the General Assembly for the right to sell a portion of its property. The portion of the property sold likely coincides with a small segment of Lot 48 to the west of the school building. An 1861 map shows an Episcopal Church on the new parcel, as well as the schoolhouse on Lot 48. Church records for St. Matthew's Parish suggest that the gothic style building next to the school was erected in 1844 and consecrated in 1856. An 1878 map shows both the church and one building noted as the Bladensburg Academy on the lot. The map also indicates the parcel on the opposite side of "North Street" was owned by the school at that time.

Bladensburg Academy ceased operations as a private school in 1885 when the property was sold to the Board of County School Commissioners for 25 dollars for use as a publicly-funded school for white children. The deed notes the presence of one building identified as the "Academy Dwelling House". Information about the school after its purchase by the county is limited, however, it seems to have retained the name "Bladensburg Academy" for quite some time.

A second photograph, dated 1910 to 1925 of the Bladensburg Academy shows a very different building. This building is a Greek Revival style, 1.5 storey brick, side-gabled, and situated on a concrete slab foundation. The front entrance consists of a protruding central gable-front covered entry with porch



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supports that were common in the early 20th century. The architectural elements of this building suggest it was built during the early 20th century, and notes on the back of the photograph indicate it was built in 1910 and subsequently destroyed by fire in 1925. The corner stone of the extant library building, originally built as a schoolhouse, has a date of 1925 indicating it was built to replace the previous school after the fire.

A 1940 map of the area shows a building labeled as a public school on Lot 48. The property most likely continued its use as a school for most of the 20th century. In 1977, the property was deeded to Prince George's County for the construction of Bladensburg Educational Media Center Site. However, the 1977 deed referred to the wrong parcels and the deed was corrected in 1988. No mention is made in either deed of existing buildings on the property. The property continues its use as a center for educational enrichment to the present day as the Bladensburg Branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System.

The site was first identified in January of 2012 during the course of a Phase I survey along MD 450 from the Peace Cross to 57th Avenue in Bladensburg. The research was carried out at the behest of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) in advance of community enhancement improvements along the highway within a 25-foot wide LOD (limit of disturbance) corridor. The roadside improvements included: the reconstruction of the intersection of MD 450 and MD 202, the construction of a landscaped median along MD 450, the widening of MD 450 to include bicycle compatible lanes/shoulders, sidewalk repair/rehabilitation/modification to ensure ADA compliance, installation of pedestrian lighting, and the consolidation of driveways for commercial properties along MD 450. Investigations were conducted in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended and the Maryland Historical Trust Act of 1985 (state law).

The Phase I field survey consisted of the manual excavation of STPs at 10 m intervals along a single transect on both sides of MD 450 (i.e., two transects total) from Peace Cross to 57th Avenue. No subsurface testing was conducted within paved areas or within 45 cm of marked utilities as part of the Phase I survey. SHA would be monitoring all construction within paved areas of the corridor with archeological potential. Transects were not placed a uniform distance from MD 450. The locations of STPs within the LOD varied by property and were adjusted to avoid impediments to testing, such as slopes, paved areas, utility lines, or obvious signs of disturbance.

STPs measured 50 X 50 cm in size and, where possible, were excavated at least 15 cm into sterile Pleistocene soils. In some cases, Pleistocene soils were more than 1 m below the surface (the limit of practical hand excavation). Additional STPs were terminated at layers of impenetrable rock fill. When prehistoric or historic artifacts were recovered from non-fill contexts, additional radial STPs were excavated in order to determine if artifacts were isolated finds or part of a larger deposit, and to define site boundaries. Radial testing around positive finds extended as much as 100 meters outside of the LOD. Soils were screened through hardware cloth. Obviously modern (post 1960) artifacts were noted on forms and discarded in the field. Historic and prehistoric artifacts were placed in bags labeled with the provenience information. Field data were recorded on standard field forms and in general field notes. The forms included soil color, soil texture, profiles, features present, artifacts recovered, excavator's initials, and the date of excavation. The locations of STPs were noted on field maps and recorded with a Trimble GeoXH GPS unit.

At 18PR1043, a total of 15 shovel tests were excavated revealing apparently intact soil horizons containing both prehistoric and historic artifacts. Preliminary investigations suggested that these deposits might be stratified. A total of 318 artifacts were recovered from the Phase I STPs. The prehistoric assemblage consisted of a Late Archaic Susquehanna broadspear, a quartzite biface, and 117 pieces of debitage. The historic artifact assemblage consisted of 16 activity items (11 pieces of hardware, a piece of lighting glass, and 4 pencil fragments), 90 architectural artifacts (6 pieces of brick, 39 window glass fragments, 4 wrought nails, 19 cut nails, 19 wire nails, and 3 other nails), 82 kitchen-related artifacts (2 tin-glazed earthenware sherds, 2 pearlware sherds, 1 porcelain sherd, 8 whiteware sherds, 63 container fragments and bottles, and 3 crown caps), and 11 miscellaneous objects (3 clinkers, 6 unidentified iron objects, and 2 unidentified objects).

The wrought nails, tin-glazed earthenware, and pearlware suggest the presence of a building on or near the property during the 18th to early 19th century. This is supported by a 1787 map of Bladensburg that indicates general area was part of a surveyed plot within the town limits. Historic maps dating from the late 19th century through the early 20th century depict a series of schoolhouses on the property, culminating in the current library building which was built as a school in 1925. The four pencil fragments (three wooden and one slate), cut nails, wire nails, whiteware sherds, and automatic machine-made vessel glass are likely associated with these schools. Nearly all of the prehistoric artifacts encountered throughout the site were recovered from a BE Horizon between 50 and 100 cm below ground surface. This suggests a single, intact prehistoric component. The identification of intact soil horizons containing potentially stratified prehistoric and historic deposits suggests 18PR1043 has the potential to yield valuable information on the prehistoric and historic occupations of the Bladensburg area. Based on these findings, Phase II testing was recommended.

Phase II evaluatory testing was conducted at Site 18PR1043 on the Bladensburg Public Library property in February of 2012. The testing entailed the excavation of 3 supplemental STPs and eleven 1 X 1 m test unit. Shovel tests were excavated in the same manner as during the Phase I survey. Test units were excavated by 10 cm levels within natural stratigraphy to a depth of 10 cm into subsoil or to the practical and safe extent of hand excavation (approximately 1 m). At least one test unit wall was photographed and drawn in profile. Features were photographed, bisected, and drawn in plan and profile. Soils from test units and features were screened through hardware cloth in order to ensure uniform artifact recovery. Field data were recorded on standard field forms and in general field notes. The forms included soil color, soil texture, profiles, features present, artifacts recovered, excavator's initials, and the date of excavation. The locations of test units and STPs were noted on field maps and recorded with a Trimble GeoXH GPS unit.

The placement of Phase II test units and STPs was based primarily on the Phase I artifact distributions, in addition, placement was designed to ensure adequate testing of the LOD, despite its location on the periphery of the site. The 3 supplemental STPs were placed north of the library parking lot in order to better define the north/northeastern site boundary. Three test units were placed within the LOD in front of the library building. Eight test units were located between the library parking lot and the chain-link fence along the western boundary of the property. Phase I STPs in this area had yielded higher concentrations of historic and prehistoric artifacts than test units in the front of the library building. In order to facilitate access to buried intact soil horizons identified during the Phase I survey, SHA supplied a gradall to strip the overlying modern fill within three 3 X 3 m blocks. Phase I STP profiles indicated that the fill was thickest around the margins of the parking area, decreasing to the west, north, and south. The blocks were placed around the west side of the parking lot. One hand-excavated test unit was placed in the center of each block.

Phase II excavations revealed the presence of a series of buried ground surfaces, Ab Horizons, and BE Horizons across the site. Based on the stratigraphy and associated artifact assemblages, the occupational sequence of the site consists of four components. The earliest occupation is a prehistoric camp dating to the Late Archaic or Transitional Period and represented in a loamy sand BE Horizon found throughout the site. Although no cultural features were identified, the presence of fire-cracked rock indicates the use of fire for heating, cooking, and perhaps preparation of stone for tool manufacture at the site. Lithic tool



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manufacturing appears to have been the primary activity, centered on the procurement and reduction of locally available quartz and quartzite cobbles into tools. Cores, debitage, and flaked stone tools recovered from the site indicate that all stages of lithic reduction occurred at the site, from initial core reduction through early stage biface edging and thinning and middle stage biface secondary thinning or shaping.

Prehistoric artifacts excavated during the Phase II testing included 6 bifaces, 1 uniface, 17 cores, 800 flakes and other pieces of debitage, 3 hammerstones, and 12 pieces of fire-cracked rock. The vast majority of the prehistoric artifacts were recovered from intact contexts. Lithic raw materials (in decreasing order of use) included quartzite, quartz, orthoquartzite, sandstone, metarhyolite, jasper, chalcedony, and siltstone.

Three buried Ab Horizons document historic use and/or occupation of the property beginning in the mid to late 18th century through the mid 20th century. During the mid 18th through early 19th century, the property laid largely abandoned, with minimal evidence of use aside from a small number of artifacts and a possible plow scar. A concentration of oyster shell was noted at the base of the 2Ab horizon that represents this period. This feature likely represents the intentional discard of oyster shells after processing and consumption in a small trash pile in an empty lot. The principal use of the property began in the 1830s with the construction of the Bladensburg Academy. The original Bladensburg Academy building appears to have stood on the property through the early 20th century when it was replaced by a second schoolhouse. This second schoolhouse was short-lived and apparently destroyed by fire in the early 1920s. The current library building was subsequently built to replace this building, representing the third and final schoolhouse to stand on the property. Artifacts and features associated with the history of the Bladensburg Academy were recovered from intact, sealed deposits.

Four historic features were identified during the Phase II investigations, including a plow scar, a small historic postmold, an historic shell layer, and a possible pit feature which was determined to be a shallow pit resulting from the removal of a modern shrub.

The Phase II historic artifact assemblage consisted of some 2,222 artifacts. The assemblage consisted of 88 activity items (including 22 pencil fragments, 16 pieces of lighting glass, 41 pieces of hardware, 2 glass marbles, 2 syringe plungers, and other objects), 11 clothing items (including 4 porcelain buttons, 1 iron button, 1 copper alloy button, a shoe nail, and a leather shoe fragment), 970 architectural artifacts (including at least 2 asbestos tiles, 63 pieces of brick, a mortar fragment, 4 ceramic pipe fragments, 5 wrought nails, 154 cut nails, 42 wire nails, and 64 other nails, 390 pieces of window glass, and 2 pieces of window came), 1,013 kitchen/domestic artifacts (including at least 19 pearlware sherds, 5 refined white earthenware, 68 whiteware sherds, 3 redware sherds, 1 white graniteware sherd, 7 porcelain sherds, 522 pieces of container glass, 3 crown caps, 1 other bottle cap, a jar lid, a key can opener, 1 floral object and 246 faunal remains), 4 arms objects, 1 personal item (a copper alloy charm), 4 tobacco-related artifacts (including at least 1 stoneware and 2 ball clay pipe fragments), and 127 miscellaneous objects (including at least 16 unidentifiable glass pieces). Although artifacts spanning the 18th through the 20th centuries were recovered, the majority of the diagnostic artifacts date to the late 19th to 20th century.

Additional Phase I investigations touched on the site during the sidewalk improvement project in Bladensburg September of 2012. This time, the work was related to infrastructure improvements along MD 201, which intersects with MD 450 near the site. The work consisted of six supplemental STPs at 10 m intervals and an additional 1 X 1 m unit, all situated within the project LOD. Methods used during this study were identical to those used earlier in 2009.

In total, 653 artifacts were recovered and one modern or historic feature was identified. The investigation identified historic and prehistoric artifacts similar to those recovered during the previous work and supported findings of intact cultural layers present beneath variable layers of fill. While artifact-bearing natural horizons were encountered, apparent disturbances were also noted. The presence of numerous utilities and paved locations suggest cultural layers containing the site have likely been disturbed in portions of the site close to the sidewalk.

Prehistoric artifacts recovered during this Phase I work included 3 bifaces, 164 debitage fragments, and 20 pieces of fire-cracked rock. Historic artifacts included 11 activity items (a plastic toy wheel, 2 pieces of lighting glass, 5 pieces of hardware and 6 pieces of safety glass), 1 clothing item (a copper alloy button), 79 architectural artifacts (30 pieces of brick, 2 pieces of mortar, 31 window glass fragments, 4 ceramic pipe fragments, 1 wrought nail, 1 possible wrought nail, 9 cut nails, and a wire nail), 25 ceramic sherds (1 refined white earthenware, 2 creamware, 6 pearlware, 6 porcelain, 2 redware, 4 whiteware, 1 white granite, and 3 stoneware), 302 container glass fragments, 22 miscellaneous kitchen items (2 mammal bones and 20 pieces of oyster shell), 5 personal items (an iron sequin and 4 coins), and 17 miscellaneous objects.

Based on the presence of an intact prehistoric component with horizontal and vertical spatial patterning, site 18PR1043 was recommended eligible for NRHP listing for its potential to yield significant information about area prehistory. Additional investigations is required (e.g., excavation or remote sensing within paved areas thought to be the former school location) to determine if the historic component contributes to the NRHP eligibility of the site. Improvements to the MD450 and MD 201 streetscapes were carried out, largely avoiding impacts to those intact portions of the site. Thus 18PR1043 retains its archeological potential.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95001879, 95001920, Site Files